

CLOSEUP

number 1 \$1.50



THE GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD
FLESH GORDON — LAND OF THE LOST

CLOSEUP

MAGAZINE

46-16 MARATHON PARKWAY, LITTLE NECK, QUEENS, NEW YORK 11362

Welcome to the premiere issue of CLOSEUP.

Our magazine is dedicated to the special world of stop-motion animation, geared to the interests of both fans and practitioners of the art form. Since proper exposition on both the aesthetics and techniques of dimensional animation demands a thorough knowledge of the subject as well as an entertaining style of writing, we plan on using the talents of only those writers and artists of the highest calibre. We believe our initial effort bears out our credo quite well.

CLOSEUP hopes to fill the void the demise of the stop-motion magazine SPECIAL VISUAL EFFECTS BY RAY HARRYHAUSEN has created and to encompass a much wider spectrum of subject matter than had been presented in the former publication.

Our first issue showcases a gallery of commentaries on Ray Harryhausen's most recent film adventure, THE GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD.

Future issues of CLOSEUP will feature:

The Puppet Films - A detailed look at George Pal's Puppetoon series, the Rankin-Bass puppet features, the work of animators Lou Bunin, Jiri Trnka, et al.

A special Jim Danforth/David Allen number devoted entirely to these two artists and their ani-work.

A filmbook on JACK THE GIANT KILLER and the behind-the-scenes story on how it evolved.

Television commercials utilizing the dimensional animation technique (Cascade Pictures and Gene Warren's Excelsior Productions). Etc.

Letters of comment, suggestions, and good will would be appreciated. Thanks for listening!

The Editors



DAVID PRESTONE
editor-in-chief
& publisher



MARK O. WOLF
consulting
editor



LAWRENCE TRUPIANO
associate editor
& co-publisher



JAMES CERIBELLO
associate editor
& cover artist

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CLOSEUP
IS AN OFFICIAL
PUBLICATION OF THE
FAT CAT STUDIO,
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

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Acknowledgements: Ernie Farino, Ms. Arleen Hollis and Mr. Stan Gottlieb of Mammoth Films, Mr. Dom Giofre of N.B.C., John Moon, The Marvel Comics Group, Tom Reamy and Trumpet magazine, and Les Schwartz and Vicki Horstford of Columbia Pictures Promotion Department.



"OUR LEADER"



"Now an unearthly bellowing mingled with the hoof beats. Nearer and nearer. The noise reached thunderous proportions.

From the cave came a huge Centaur. Its muscular horse legs bucked and kicked. Its human torso rippled and heaved. And from its ugly fang-toothed face glinted one great central eye."

The Golden Voyage of Sinbad



FILMBOOK 1







THE EFFECTS

AN EXAMINATION
OF THE VISUAL EFFECTS
IN THE GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD

by MARK D. WOLF

Prompted by the unexpected financial success of **GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD**, Columbia Pictures has requested that the team of Ray Harryhausen and Charles Schneer produce yet another adventure film based on the exploits of Sinbad, which is tentatively being referred to as **SINBAD AT THE WORLD'S END** (with scripting by Beverly Cross, who worked on **JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS**). Other reactions to **GOLDEN VOYAGE** have varied widely, from disappointment to enrapturement, with one thing for

sure—everyone, from fans to men in the business, is absolutely elated that the film is such an overwhelming success, hoping that the film will give fantasy film-making (with stop-motion effects) a shot in the arm and boost production.

But many people feel that the quality of the visual effects in this picture are a real let-down; a first for Ray Harryhausen.

Blessed with the talents of a man as gifted as Ray Harryhausen helming the special effects, **GOLDEN VOYAGE** had the potential for becoming an

instant fantasy classic (as have so many of Ray's other past ventures); but, many people think that somewhere along the way the picture's incredible potential was only half-realized, resulting in an uneven blend of scenes of excellence contrasted with scenes of mediocrity.

Let me begin this appraisal of the visuals in the film by examining the stop-motion models, in regard to their construction, animation, etc., beginning with the *Homunculus* and the others following in order of their screen appearance.

The film proper has hardly begun when the initial animation cuts appear, featuring the tiny Homunculus hovering high above Sinbad's ship.

It was immediately apparent that Ray had, in this creature, created marvelously realistic wing movements which closely simulated the motions of real wings; these wing flaps are a drastic departure from the traditional Harryhausen approach (as used in the harpies, the Parent Roc, or the pterodactyls), indicating that the remarkably smooth scenes of the Homunculus flying were the result of a conscious effort on Ray's part to avoid the frenetic, stroboscopic flappings of his earlier creations. The fluidity of motion resulted from the wingtips bending with the flow of action on ascension or descension; the improvement in the realistic portrayal of a living flying beast, with this refinement of appendage manipulation, is a striking improvement in technique that will be hopefully be carried over into the flying creatures seen in Harryhausen projects yet to come.

Some complaint has been voiced over the model's similarities in design to the earlier Ymir, seen in 20 MILLION MILES TO EARTH. Though the super-hardcore stop-motion buff may find his enjoyment of the Homunculus hampered by recollections of the Venusian monster in the earlier film, Ray strives to give the creature a personality all its own with unique crouches, stances, etc. and his animation gives the little spy a believability all its own. Perhaps the remembrances of the 1957 model would have been alleviated if Ray had chosen to sculpt the figure more closely along the lines of his

pre-production concept.

As originally conceived on paper, the diminutive eavesdropper was to have been endowed with a much more humanized structure in the head & face, with tiny spikes along the skull to help fantasize it. Additionally, the creature's tail was to have been significantly longer (much closer to the Ymir's than was finally built), the wings were to have been smaller and much more bat-like in configuration, and the overall skin texture was to have been much smoother than the scaled effect that was finally used. . .

Still, the model is similar in many respects to the Ymir, and the decision for the likenesses is questionable, yet the creature is none the less highly enjoyable as a character in the film proceedings. In truth, the model's only drawback lies in its drably unimaginative, monotone blue paint job; all the models in GOLDEN VOYAGE seem to have been cursed with bad paint jobs, and the animation barely compensates for the screen presence that is robbed from the models because of lack of attention given to their pigmentation. . . the individual models' paint jobs will be examined later on.

Regrettably there are no close-ups of the Homunculus, which would have been a marvelous opportunity for Ray to have the little fellow "emote" and thus really develop its personality & believability. The lack of facial mobility in the Homunculus is doubtless attributable to budget considerations; a small sacrifice made to permit use of capital on something else considered more vital to the picture. In cold business thinking, would the extra time (and hence

MONEY) required to provide the ani-puppet with wiggling ears, curling lips, or mobile eyebrows be worth it? Would a malleable face have generated enough extra business at the box-office to warrant the additional expenditures from the budget??

The scenes in the Vizier's vault are exceptionally well-executed (even if it is never explained just how the little devil finagled his way into the darkened chamber), being a showcase of Harryhausen's abilities. As the Homunculus listens intently to Sinbad and the Vizier from high atop his stoney perch (in one of the most convincingly lit shots Ray has ever pulled off), the feeling of contact between the tiny spy and his surroundings is fantastic.

Once it has been knocked down from its vantage point, the "Chase of the Homunculus" is beautifully staged; we feel the miniscule beastie's desperate panic as it frantically scurries about on the vault floor seeking shelter from the towering giants pursuing it. It is crippled, with a wing held close to the body, and it almost trips and falls a couple of times as it scrambles along the floor. . . and people in the audience feel sorry for it. The whole sequence is testimony to Ray's mastery of conveying emotion through body movement.

The least successful shot of the

BOTTOM, LEFT AND RIGHT:

The legendary Sinbad the Sailor and his intrepid crew, their swords at the ready, prepare to fight yet another mythological creature, conjured up by their arch enemy - the evil magician, Koura.





Above:

The wily Homunculus, eavesdropping on Sinbad and the Vizier. No closeups of the creature were shot, doubtfully attributed to budget considerations.

Right:

The Dance of Kali, patterned by Ray after traditional Oriental movements.

winged-spy is the first time it lands on Koura's arm, like a pet falcon. The shot was filmed by rear projecting a background plate of Tom Baker as Koura slowly lowering his arm. The Homunculus model was strung up on an aerial brace and positioned frame by frame to align with the live action arm as it moved. The synchronization of the elements gets off occasionally, producing the visual sensation that the Homunculus is floating about Koura's arm; that there is no solid contact. The synchronization difficulties would have been greatly minimized (if not eliminated altogether) if Ray had rigged scale-size prop Homunculus feet to the actor's arm; thus all he would have had to do was align the model to the plate using the prop feet as a guide. Budget considerations might have precluded the use of prop feet. All in all, the shot was less than amazing.

There is a similar shot later in the film, shortly after the "birth" of the second Homunculus on board Koura's ship, when the crafty mage coaxes the diminutive little fellow up onto his arm. This shot is a split screen, with the matte line following along the top of Koura's arm, effectively masking the animation stage to which the model was affixed. This shot was much more convincing than the first such attempt at having the model on the sorcerer's arm.



After the scenes with the first Homunculus, the next ani-sequence "stars" the ship's Siren figurehead, which is brought to life by evil Koura to pilfer nautical charts from our good captain.

This model is gorgeously sculpted, with a magnificent wood grain texture reflecting much careful attention to detail, though she is saddled with a dull monotone paint job that is bland beyond words. Her effectiveness would have been immeasurably enhanced had her paint job been given some serious consideration; she begged to be painted in such a way as to simulate faded areas and chipping paint, the result of the weather-and-sea beatings received on Sinbad's previous voyages. Other portions of the ship were shown to be well worn and faded, so why was the Siren neglected; she would have vastly benefited from that extra special touch. Interestingly, the excellent full-size mock-up of the Siren is also monotone; yet, the mock-up Kali figures have superb paint jobs (unlike the miniature Kali), indicating that the drab monotone painting of the Siren was deliberate and considered well in advance.

The animation is very carefully designed, as she moves with stiff halting movements as though she actually is being controlled mentally from miles away by the straining Koura. The Feb. 1974 MOVIE MAKER had this to say about the sequence:

"The significant thing here is that a great deal of thought has gone into the way this figure is animated so that it moves and behaves as a wooden creature

might be expected to do, with an appropriate rigidity and creakiness about its movements. Particularly good is the moment when it first wrenches its shoulders free from the prow of the ship; there's a glorious rending and splintering sound as the creature flexes its wooden muscles—which proves how much a contrived soundtrack can add to the success of a visual special effect."

The sound effects in the sequence very effectively enhance the eeriness of the scenes and reinforce the belief that the Siren is actually made of wood.

She has barely torn free from the prow (with a perfect blending of foam model to miniature ship prow) when she effortlessly throttles an animated seaman and then casually discards him over the side. The ani-man is quite nice and mood lighting helps the reality of the sequence. It is interesting to note that the ani-humans in this film are, on the whole, of a generally larger scale in relation to their beasties than in any other Harryhausen film, except 20 MILLION with its fabulous barn sequence. Ray's humans are so successful that the average film-goer frequently doesn't detect the substitution of models for the real thing.

The reactions of the Siren are great; she grabs a tormenting spear, and then slowly drops it at her side. . . and particularly impressive is the last medium up angle shot of her with her arm swung back with the intent of using that massive harpoon to decimate Sinbad—when suddenly she stops and pauses as the mental command to cease

comes from Koura. The lighting, composition, color control, model position, etc. are stunning.

And her reaction to the sailor's torches is one of fear as she strives to ward off the touch of the flame with her arms, just prior to grabbing up the harpoon to defend herself. . .

Thankfully she is saved from "yet-another-death-by-fire," and her sequence, highlighted by dynamic, inspired model animation with atmospheric mood lighting and flawless split/screens produced not only one of the most intriguing segments of GOLDEN VOYAGE, but one of the most memorable episodes in any of Ray's recent projects.

Soon after the Siren has done her errand for Koura, the sly magician sets about conjuring up a new Homunculus, using his own blood (a nice touch, that) as a key ingredient in giving life to the little fellow. The birth pangs of the Homunculus harken back to Dr. Leonardo's table top, with mewling sound effects and fearful reactions on the part of the Homunculus to the giant looming over him contributing to the recollection/comparison of the earlier birth sequence in 20 MILLION MILES TO EARTH. Both display fine character animation in the models as they regard the gigantic humans staring down at them. . . Though in SINBAD the Homunculus accepts the human as friend; in 20 MILLION the Ymir doesn't get the chance! The background plates of the live action for the Homunculus scenes are somewhat muddy, not nearly of the high quality displayed in the Siren sequence, but the animation overcomes this minor flaw and the whole birth sequence is quite enjoyable.

Some interesting scenes with the Homunculus occur after it departs from Koura's ship. One is a nice long shot of Sinbad and his men walking on their trek towards the Temple of the Oracle. Nothing unusual. . . till all of a sudden the little spy walks on; Ray had been using a BG plate all the time into which he introduced the model most effectively. A similar shot occurs at the entrance to the Temple, as Sinbad and his men walk down the stairs, what should suddenly poke its head into the doorway than the Homunculus. . . the addition of the animated element after focusing on live action is a highly interesting approach to giving the



impression that the creature is a part of its environment.

Once Sinbad and his men are trapped in the Temple of the Oracle, the intrepid sailor decides to climb out thru a vent in the roof of the cavern using a makeshift rope of turbans, sashes, etc. During his climb, the Homunculus attacks him, and Ray's animation as the actor brushes aside the flapping critter is astonishingly smooth. Sinbad buffets the creature about a few times, till it is killed by an arrow from below whereupon it falls to the floor of the Temple. . . and the foam model is replaced by a latex cast figure of the Homunculus (as was used on board Koura's ship when the magician was lifting it toward the open window). The ani-puppet is beautifully synchronized to the movements of the live actor in this sequence.

Many people consider the next ani-sequences, the Dance of the Kali and the Swordfight with the Kali to be the best moments in the film, and some of the most unique footage yet produced by Ray.

The Kali figure is a perfect example of how stop-motion can be fully utilized to dramatically visualize the fantastically impossible.

Looking over Ray's sketches for the sequence it is easy to fantasize a dance with the statue wheeling about

The fight with Kali.

the temple in wild gyrations; what was filmed, however, is essentially an ani-adaptation of a traditional oriental dance. The model's movements are meticulously synchronized to the accompanying music as she moves faster and faster to the conclusion of the sitar-ish soundtrack, building a marvelous oriental mood to the sequence. The movements of the arms and hands are especially smooth in Ray's interpretation of the dance. It is probable that Ray spent some time studying footage of real dancers, analyzing the complex gestures & posturings; possibly footage was shot expressly as an aid to him in animating the Kali.

The swordfight, while being technically well done with excellent sword substitutions, splits, etc., is just too clean, which hampers its effectiveness. Not that excessive bloodletting and gore was called for, it is simply that for being such an awesome, invincible engine of destruction, surprisingly few injuries are sustained by even inconsequential members of the crew. A slight amount of bloodshed would have emphasized the risks that the men were taking by daring to cross swords with the six-armed Goddess. There is no sense of

(Continued on page 31)

THE DRAWINGS



ABOVE: Koura and the Homunculus. In the pre-planning stages, the Homunculus was to have had a much more human-like appearance. Note face and torso. . .

BELOW: The Siren Figurehead, before Koura's spell brings it to life.





ABOVE: An exterior Centaur-Human fight that was not filmed as drawn. The fight sequence took place, instead inside, beside the Fountain of Destiny.

BELOW: The Griffin. Again, the powerfully muscled creature of this pre-production drawing was replaced with a poorly animated, over-furred animated model.





ABOVE: The Duel of the Monsters—Centaur versus Griffin.

BELOW: The Fountain of Destiny, with its Stonehenge-like rock formations. Note the two sunlit openings in the mountain's interior.



THE CREATURES

HISTORICAL ORIGINS AND INTERPRETATIONS

by PAUL MANDELL



In the Spring of 1974, Columbia Pictures released the latest Charles Schneer-Ray Harryhausen production, *THE GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD*. As anticipated by eager fans and general audiences alike, the film dazzled the eye with Mr. Harryhausen's wizardry in stop-motion animation and visual effects. It had been fifteen years since the legendary Sinbad battled creatures of the imagination in *THE SEVENTH VOYAGE* and there have been varied and chaotic opinions among fans of the Dynamation film (now labeled *Dynarama*) as to which production offered a better end result with regard to technique and story construction. Although I for one cannot find anything charitable to say about some of the lines in Brian Clemens' screenplay, Ray in his original story conception has made a sincere attempt to elevate the Arabian Nights motif by leaving the genie in the bottle and weaving a more atmospheric and mystical tale for the Sinbad character to exploit. Despite the fact that many have felt it marred by silly dialogue and one-dimensionalism on the part of the actors, *THE GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD* is nevertheless a treat to behold. I do believe that the major factor contributory to the general wave of adverse reaction against the film has been the definite change in style. Die-hard fans of *Dynamation* — whoops — *Dynarama* films seem to find it difficult to adjust to jump-cuts, hand-held cameras, optical zooms (techniques which are run of the mill to director Gordon Hessler due to his heavy television background) and the loss of Bernard Hermann's brooding musical inter-

pretations which have so superbly complemented Harryhausen's imagery in the past. Call it "Dynamation conditioning," if you will. Admittedly, I find myself falling into that category. Be that as it may, *GOLDEN VOYAGE* is entertaining to watch, and as expected, a stunning visual experience.

As it was with *THE 7th VOYAGE OF SINBAD* (original idea by Ray with a script by Kenneth Kolb), Ray has concocted a new swashbuckling tale transposing mythological demons and creatures into an Arabian Nights framework. Striving for originality, Ray and his scriptwriters have never quite felt behooved to stick to the orthodox order of classical mythology. Imaginative transposition of such beasts in combination with new hybrid creatures of wonder have been characteristic of the mythological *Dynamation* films. Although there have been many instances where critics have panned the storyline merely on the basis of the taking of creatures out of context, as it was with *JASON & THE ARGONAUTS* ("more bull than Bullfinch"), it would seem futile for representatives of the media to drive this point into the ground. Mr. H. and his associates have never professed to be cine-practitioners of stories adhering strictly to the classics. Their tales have been conglomerations of familiar heroics and clever interpretations of fantasy images. It would therefore be interesting to cite the origins of the creatures showcased in *GOLDEN VOYAGE* and compare their classical imagery with Harryhausen's lively interpretations on the screen.



The word "homunculus" has been a rather common one in the fantasy film, though it has yet to find its place in Webster's. Derived from the Latin, the word implies an artificial being created in the image of man and, according to legend, the creation of a being out of natural elements. Carlos Clarens, in speaking of such a creature in his definitive **ILLUSTRATED HISTORY OF THE HORROR FILM**, points out that the subject matter can be traced back to the Greek myth of Prometheus, the titan who stole heavenly fire from the gods in order to infuse life into his own creation. Prometheus, according to legend, was created with a compound of the four elements — air, earth, fire, and water. During the Middle Ages, those elements became the instruments of the alchemists, whose highest goals were the discovery of the philosopher's stone (which transmuted metals into gold) and the creation of the homunculus. The 1916 German film **HOMUNCULUS**, dealt with in six chapters, had for its hero "an unnatural being, artificially created in a laboratory, who grows up to be a superman both in intellect and in moral nature but who, upon discovering his true origin, becomes a malevolent creature bringing disaster to those around him." In the finale, nature takes a hand and destroys the Homunculus with a bolt of lightning. Thus, as we subsequently saw in **THE GOLEM** and later in **FRANKENSTEIN**, the realization of the homunculus concept became an important character in the fantasy film. Likewise, Ernest Theisger as Dr. Praetorius in **BRIDE OF FRANKENSTEIN** created his own brand of "homunculi," beings in man's own image created artificially by "black" science. As the good Doctor remarked in the film, "I grow my creatures like cultures — from seed."

In **GOLDEN VOYAGE**, Harryhausen and scripter Clemens paralleled early legend with the creation of their own bastard brand of Homunculus, a bat-like humanoid figure spawned from, among other elements, the evil Prince Koura's blood. It is only in terms of creation that we can relate the term homunculus to the precedence set for us in myth and legend. In the film, the creature serves as a spy for the evil Prince, merely an extension of his eyes and ears. There are two of such creatures in the film. The first, in a loose analogy to the German film described earlier, is disintegrated into a pile of dry leaves after it has served its purpose. The second one is created by Koura to spy on Sinbad during the sea voyage.

From the outset, we can clearly recognize a familiarity in Harryhausen's imagery. The Homunculus is an obvious cross between two of Ray's previous creations, manifesting the dimensions and movement of the Venusian Ymir (a word itself derived from Norse mythology meaning "giant borne out of the waves") and the wings of the malevolent Happy. Looking quite puppet-like in closeup, Harryhausen tactfully conceals the creature's features in shadow. This same disheartening lack of care with regard to facial elaboration can be found in *The Creature*, a creature to be discussed later on. Surely more detailed physiognomies of such humanoid creatures would be expected in Harryhausen's model work. Unfortunately, it is sadly lacking in



GOLDEN VOYAGE when needed. One only has to think of the characterizations cynically displayed by the Ymir or the Cyclops and the point is clearly made.

The wooden Siren Figurehead, coming to life much as Takos did in deadpan fashion, was perhaps the most eerily effective animated characterization in the film. Gliding in and out of shadowy areas of the ship's deck in stilted, zombie-like style and interacting superbly with the astonished crew, the sequence is as surreal as one could expect from a well-executed atmospheric Harryhausen segment. As it was with Takos, there seems to be a very special sense of wonder evoked by an ominous-looking, inanimate figure suddenly endowed with life in comparison with more predictable creatures. The word "Siren," however, can only be applied to the Figurehead in terms of gender and the sea. According to legend, the Sirens were sea nymphs who had the power of charming all those who heard them by their song — mariners were irresistibly impelled to cast themselves into the sea to their destruction. In Homer's *ODYSSEY*, Odysseus supposedly overcame an ordeal with them by filling both his and his crewman's ears with wax, thereby remaining oblivious to the supernatural charms of the Sirens. Ray made use of this legend in **THE 7th VOYAGE OF SINBAD** for the tale of the Wailing Demons segment. And, of course, his ingenious animation of the Figurehead in **GOLDEN VOYAGE** was far superior to non-

animated, "eye-opening" interpretation given to the Argos female Figurehead in **JASON & THE ARGONAUTS**. One might argue the validity of this analogy, since the figurehead in **GOLDEN VOYAGE** was an automaton-like creature bent on the destruction of the crewman, while the one in **JASON** was a mere bodiless representation of the goddess Hera requiring no elaborate movement. Nevertheless, the animation of the Siren was startling in effect. An animated creature need not have seven heads in order to be exciting.

The animation and interaction with the Hindu goddess Kali, represented in the film as a grotesque ambidextrous statue, was the anticipated tour de force for Harryhausen's effects in the film and the sequence did come off quite well. The imagery of Kali varies in anthologies on mythology, but the common denominator among all interpretations is that she is a powerfully malevolent, terrifying figure, oft times referred to in the Hindu myths as "The Black One," and the wife of Shiva (or Siva), the Destroyer. Sometimes she is illustrated astride a huge white bull together with her wife Kali, strangling evil-doers with a rope. She has even been interpreted into the world of Norse mythology as the goddess Hel, "who was half black and half blue, and lived dimly on the brains and marrow of men. Hel was the third offspring of the dreadful Loki, who dwelt in the land of the dead. Hel is, in fact, the dreadful goddess Kali."¹ A horrifying personality profile, to

say the least.

Further descriptions of Kali are just as grotesque. Author Joseph Campbell cites her as a creature with four arms representing Universal power. (Note the six arms in Harryhausen's version. Obviously an arbitrary embellishment on Ray's part, and quite a switch from the days when an octopus had to be represented as a "quintopus" due to economic factors.) The upper left hand of Kali brandished a bloody saber; the lower gripping by the hair a severed human head; the upper right lifted in a "fear not" gesture; and the lower extended. As a necklace, she wore a garland of human heads; her kilt was a girdle of human arms; and her long tongue was out to lick blood! "Kali, the Cosmic Power, combining the terror of absolute destruction with an impersonal yet motherly reassurance."² Ray's interpretation of Kali was quite close to mythical descriptions such as the one above, but certainly not as graphic. Although her necklace wasn't comprised of human heads nor was her kilt a writhing mass of arms, Ray streamlined her in detail and endowed her with some uncanny mannerisms. Of course, Kali in the film is nothing but another soulless automaton and a tool for the evil Koura's vengeance. Another interesting interpretation was offered by author S.N. Kramer: "Kali, who in her elation of annihilating demons, danced until the earth rocked and the gods feared for her safety, whereupon they called Shiva to intercede, and he lay down before her until she danced on his body and then in shock, stopped. In such forms, she rides upon a terrifying lion, and has many arms carrying an immense array of weapons (as exemplified in the film). These sides of her headhead demand bloody sacrifices, the victim usually being a goat but legend tells of humans as well."³ Undoubt-

edly.

Harryhausen must be given particular credit for his animation of this anomaly. Due to the nature of her form, Kali was quite awkward in her movements and could not be compared with the graceful choreography displayed by Ray's Serpent Woman in THE 7th VOYAGE. Despite these limitations, he did manage to endow Kali with some clever touches. The "neck dance" was wondrous to behold and in all probability surprised many Harryhausen fans. Although a bit clumsy in her sword-wielding fight with Sinbad and a few technical drawbacks with regard to Dynarama (Ray's painted foreground platforms hardly matched the color of the rear-projected image, etc.), the sequence was startling. One must agree that her movements were certainly appropriate to her anatomy.

The appearance of the final two, more familiar creatures, namely the Griffin and the Centaur, came in rather anti-climactic and somewhat lethargic sequences. The prelude to the appearance of the Centaur, though, exhibited some flair for atmosphere and build-up, with the monster's ominous shadow lurking on the cave walls. Somewhat discouraging was the lack of facial detail and the sound effect used for the Centaur's voice. Of course, no one knows what a half-horse, half-man should sound like but the bellows and moans seemed embarrassingly reminiscent of Paul Frees' grunts & groans for Bert Gordon's THE CYCLOPS. But those are minor points to dwell on.

As definitively described in Bullfinch's, the Centaur was a creature represented as a man from head to loins, with the remainder of the body that of a horse. In GOLDEN VOYAGE, the Centaur is presented as cavelurking beast, malevolent and dangerous. Surprisingly, this is quite contradictory to the

classic mythological representation of the Centaur. According to legend, "the ancients were too fond of a horse to consider his union of his nature's with man's, and accordingly, the Centaur is the only one of the fancied monsters of antiquity to which any good traits were assigned."⁴

Further investigation reveals that the Centaurs had an affinity for the bottle. According to the Greek, the Centaurs became intoxicated at the wedding of Pirithous, and a dreadful conflict arose in which some of them were slain. This is the celebrated battle of the Lapithae and the Centaurs, a favorite subject of sculpture and poets of antiquity. Chiron, on the other hand, was a renowned Centaur noted for his skill in hunting, medicine, and music, and the art of prophecy. He was the wisest of all the Centaurs. Upon his death, Jupiter placed him among the stars in the constellation Sagittarius.

The Gryphon (or Griffin) was quite a grotesque creature, and, in GOLDEN VOYAGE, was used merely as a combat figure for the Centaur. Ray's interpretation of the Gryphon was entirely in phase with its description in classical mythology. Note the similarity between the monster's head and that of the fabulous Roc in THE 7th VOYAGE. According to Thomas Bullfinch, the Gryphon was a truly hybrid monstrosity with the body of a lion, the head and wings of an eagle, and its back covered with feathers. Like the bird, it built its nest, "and instead of an egg, laid an agate" (which must've been pretty painful, even for a Gryphon!) He had long claws and talons of such size that people made them into drinking cups. India was assigned as the native country of the Gryphons. They found gold in the mountains and built nests of it, for which reasons their nests were very tempting to hunters, and the beasts were forced to keep vigilant guard over them. Their instinct led them to know where buried treasure was, and the Gryphons did their best to keep plunderers at a distance.

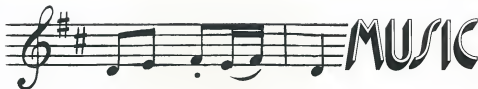
THE GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD was a fascinating visual experience, to say the least. But as most films within this very special genre, it had its inherent drawbacks in dramatic content and still remains contingent with the running argument of whether or not an obvious showcase for Ray Harryhausen's wonderful effects should be considered "bad cinema." The film did leave something to be desired, and perhaps Ray will someday achieve what might be considered the "perfect Dynarama film," if that is at all possible. I've heard rumors of a sequel to the new SINBAD. Perhaps that in itself may generate a new wave of "brooding anxiety" among Harryhausen fans three or four years from now. But one can be sure of one thing: Ray's unique style of model animation and composite design will never degenerate. Hopefully he will further broaden his scope, inevitably leading to new and better things to come.

1. A. Murray, MANUAL OF MYTHOLOGY.
2. J. Campbell, HERO WITH A 1000 FACES.
3. S.N. Kramer, MYTHS OF THE ANCIENT WORLD.
4. T. Bullfinch, BULLFINCH'S MYTHOLOGY.





DAVID L. CARSON



Some of the finest and most beautiful music composed for films came from the imagination of Miklos Rozsa, who along with Bernard Herrmann is the only major film composer surviving from the Golden Era of Hollywood filmmaking. Rozsa, as is rather well-known, not only writes for films, but has a respected place in concert repertoire as a composer of art music, and is an accomplished conductor. He is also a musicologist, a person trained in the study of all musical cultures and music history. This fact, no doubt, is what makes his music for historical pageants and stories set in far-flung areas of the globe seem so authentic in character. Ray Harryhausen once had this to say about Miklos Rozsa, in an interview: "Another composer I admire greatly is Miklos Rozsa, mainly for his marvelous score for *THE THIEF OF BAGDAD*. It is such a pity that these exceptional pieces of music can be so easily forgotten." The announcement that Rozsa would score Harryhausen's *THE GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD* caused great excitement in many quarters.

The score that resulted is not one of Rozsa's most inspired, but it represents professionalism and artistry rare, if not absent, in contemporary film scoring. The score does suffer from a curiously undernourished sound, in some cases (particularly the opening music), which suggests that Rozsa might have been forced to make do with reduced orchestral resources, due to a constrained music budget. That is merely speculation, of course.

Rozsa's score, employing the technique of most film scores, achieves unity through the use of character themes (leitmotifs) which are woven throughout the film like narrative threads. One of these is, naturally enough, the main theme we hear under the credits. Another is the tender strain which characterizes the relationship between Sinbad and the slave girl Margianna. Yet another is the sinister theme for the scheming Koura. The last

is the music for the Vizier, which ultimately becomes intertwined with the theme of Destiny which runs through the film.

The main title music, or Prelude, commences with a portentous fanfare which suffers a bit from the diluted orchestra, leading into the principal theme, taken by the strings. This music is not initially bracing, having a travelog quality to it, but the middle section is lovely and lyrical, and typically Rozsa. The music closes with a sinuous figure played by solo flute.

The first scene, in which Sinbad first encounters Koura's Homunculus, is provided with an eerie musical accompaniment. Glistening arpeggios (or, broken chords) are played on the celesta (like a set of bells played by keyboard), and by a harp in its upper register, with a mysterious shimmer on a suspended cymbal, all over a pedal (or, sustained note) on an electronic instrument. This same instrument launches into the first unworlly statement of the theme for Koura (who is being represented by his flying minion). This instrument may be an ondes martenot (like a keyboard theremin) or a modern synthesizer, but whatever it is, the sound is just right. When the creature drops the amulet, there is a high piccolo trill and a plunging glissando by the electronic voice, leading to a reprise of Koura's theme as the creature flies away.

Sinbad has a nightmare which brings him visions of Koura and even Margianna, plus the amulet, and the Homunculus. Each of these manifestations are reflected in Rozsa's music. This scene, and the ensuing storm, are scored fundamentally with the theme for Koura, albeit transformed by furious syncopeations (rhythmic alterations) and colorful orchestration.

The calm sunrise is beautifully characterized by strings played

THE SCORE OF THE GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD

by Craig Reardon

tremolo, to effect a shining background, with soft ringing chords played by the celesta and gentle triplet phrases played by solo oboe.

Koura's furious pursuit of Sinbad into the city of Marabia is counterpointed by an energetic version of the Koura theme in the brass, together with the insistent tattoo of a snare drum. This crescendoes with Koura's sorcery, which brings down the gate to shield him from the soldiers. Then we see the golden-masked Vizier for the first time, which provokes his theme. It is an exotic phrase played by solo English horn (a low oboe), over the pulse of a single drum, sounding mysteriously Oriental.

The lyrical music for Margianna is heard with her first appearance in the home of a wily merchant, who foists his dissolute son (together with Margianna) on Sinbad. This melody is played by a sensuous combination of woodwinds which are very lovely. Directly after this scene, Sinbad casts off, to a stirring rendition of the main theme scored for full orchestra.

The Siren sequence is superbly scored by Rozsa, which is almost disguised by the fact that the sound men dubbed it wretchedly, making it almost inaudible in the film (fortunately it can be heard on the soundtrack album). Aside from very skillful deployment of the brass and woodwinds, this music nicely exploits the distinctive wooden rattle of the xylophone. This develops into a staccato theme for the stalking Siren. It develops gradually to an exciting syncopated frenzy involving the whole

orchestra, and when Sinbad and men flail their torches, cymbal trills and wildly swirling figures in the flutes create a panicky sound. Rozsa effectively creates a watery effect as the sunken Siren is raised, via a solo clarinet playing a rippling phrase in perpetual motion.

There is a dry and simmering music for Koura's fabrication of a new Homunculus, which relies heavily on the eerie timbre of the electronic instrument, and on equally queasy trills in the woodwinds. When Koura launches the atrocious little beast, out a porthole, there is a thrilling upward electronic glissando, and a filigree of wild fluttering arpeggios in the high woodwinds.

The sighting of Lemuria is signalled by a droning, Oriental kind of music which becomes a rich tapestry of unusual sounds as they land.

The Temple of the Oracle is characterized by a mysterious melodic figure played by a flute in its breathy lower register, along with the thump of a drum and muted brass, and the chime of "ancient cymbals" (tiny bell-like cymbals). There are exciting musical fireworks for the Oracle himself, or itself, as the case may be!

From here we will skip ahead to Kali's incredible dance. Rozsa scores this with an authentic-sounding imitation of an Indian raga, played probably on a sitar. *(Editors note: This small portion of music is not included on the English UNITED ARTISTS Record album of this film's soundtrack, so it is essentially an incomplete recording.)* The thrilling fight which follows, in which Kali performs like a murderous Samurai (and looks like a threshing machine), is supported with more Occidental, but still Eastern-flavored music. This is played initially by the string choir with brass percussion, and then the horns play an arcing phrase with sharp punctuations by trumpets; the xylophone rattles off an insouciant phrase, then joins the ensemble; and the theme is restated with pounding brass and an incisive rhythm in the strings. It all builds to a frenzy, until the statue is upset, in a riot of fluorescent musical color.

There is much obligatory musical distress as the Green Men prepare to sacrifice Margianna. A peculiar whirling effect in the woodwinds creates



The England printed soundtrack album UAS 29576. (This album available only in Import record shops.)

anxiety until the Centaur appears, characterized with a lumbering four-note theme in the brass. Meanwhile, Koura has been heading toward the Fountain of Destiny. Unfortunately, as he discovers it, the sound men favor his outburst over the transmission of Rozsa's music. The music begins with a short, portentous prelude which begins to scintillate with a trill of cymbals and triangle, and segues into a sensual swirling of flutes and clarinets, which create an impression of the tumbling waters. Then there is a heroic theme stated by trumpets, and a feeling of destiny is properly conveyed.

Sinbad stumbles over the bony remains of past sacrifices to the Centaur, and Rozsa creates nicely bizarre, percussive musical effects. When Sinbad discovers Margianna, weeping softly, Rozsa's scoring is tender, employing his theme for the girl.

The lively struggles with the Centaur, and between the Centaur and the Griffin, are supported with stormy music which is based on the Centaur's four-note theme, carried primarily by the brass. Rozsa sustains this high dudgeon until the climactic fight between Koura and Sinbad. First there is a nervous statement of Koura's theme, then the music sweeps into an exciting counterpoint to the duel. A fanfare-like figure develops in the trumpets, is echoed by trombones and horns, and imitated in the strings, which suggests the atmosphere of a tournament. Then there are taunting, breathless rhythms which seem to mock Sinbad and side with Koura. The

woodwinds dance and the strings create a surging background, propelling the battle to its conclusion. As Koura makes the fatal error of stepping into the fountain's waters, which render him visible, we hear the last powerful statement of his theme, whereupon Sinbad slays him, and there is a climax of stabbing brass and strings. As the fountain becomes stained in a welter of blood, and devours Koura, we hear the last strains of his theme, disappearing in the bass under a shimmer of the celesta. When the waters clear and glow with a golden radiance, the moment of childlike ecstasy is reflected in Rozsa's music, an optimistic and gentle statement of Margianna's theme, with rippling celesta and harp. It symbolizes the triumph of good over evil, which is the substance of all heroic fairytales.

The main theme is heard in a portentous manner until shimmering string effects and harp glissandi signal that the waters of the Fountain are reflecting Sinbad as a richly-robed prince. When Sinbad and Margianna see this, the music is quietly regal, sparkling with figures played by glockenspiel. But the melody is the theme of the Vizier, and this is a clue to Sinbad's decision, which is to give the crown to the Vizier, fulfilling the Destiny. The theme builds in power until it is transformed into a noble and thrilling fanfare, accompanying the transformation of the Vizier into his former self.

The film closes with a full and robust reading of the main theme which sounds more beautiful and exciting here than ever before.



COMPARISON

THE TWO VOYAGES OF SINBAD

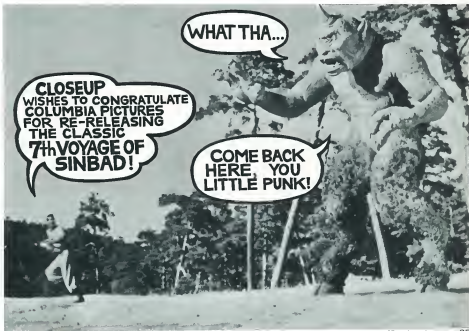
by Craig Reardon



In a way, one can look at THE GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD as a film which brings the best of Ray Harryhausen's movies full circle from the motion picture which set a standard for all of them, THE 7TH VOYAGE OF SINBAD. That film showed animation a way to escape from the confines of 'lost worlds' and the 'monster that ate Chicago' formula, and so embrace themes from famous literature and mythology. It helped expand and liberate the art of animation. Harryhausen has always used animation with incomparable panache. His is not the philosophical or didactic approach of course, and that is not the correct inference to take when we refer to his animation as an art.

Instead it is like the art of a great magician, whose virtuosity and dramatic flair conceal the laborious work underneath. Although anchored to reality via an interplay with human beings, his animated sequences are ideal flights of pure fancy and fantasy.

When Harryhausen first decided to use his talents to resuscitate angry monsters from the tales of Scheherazade, in lieu of losing yet another mutation in a metropolis, he created a sensation. This was greatly augmented by the added dimension of Technicolor. For the first time we were given fascinating animated effects in a dazzling atmosphere of color. THE 7TH VOYAGE OF SINBAD established a precedent. Henceforth every Harryhausen film would also be in color, and would also exploit the presence of several animated characters in varied situations. Also, the quantum improvement in overall production values noticeable in THE 7TH VOYAGE OF SINBAD, over the early Schnier-Harryhausen co-productions, would be sustained in subsequent films.



(Continued on page 35)

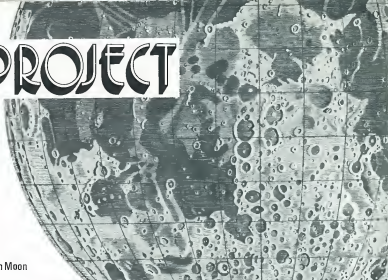
FAN PROJECT

MOON MODELS

by Allen Osborne



John Moon



I was recently asked by Dave Prestone if I would write a piece about the replica models my friend and animation collaborator, Mr. John Moon, was making for Columbia Pictures (here in Melbourne, Australia) for displays in stores as part of the pre-release promotions for **THE GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD**. I have been corresponding with Dave since I returned from a tour of the U.S.A. and England (a tour to study model animation techniques) last year; and I had mentioned these 'Moon-models' to him in one of my letters. Dave thought it would be appropriate to include the story of their creation in this first issue of **CLOSE UP**.

The way in which the idea which led to the construction of these models came about is a long and somewhat complicated story, but I will do my best to give the reader a clear outline of how it came about.

Ever since John Moon and I first met, we had had some difficulty in obtaining material relating to animation films, such as stills, posters, etc. I had managed to buy stills from several sources in the U.S.A. but found it almost impossible to obtain those photos that never reach the public, the behind-the-scenes shots. So early in 1973 I wrote to Charles H. Schneer to try and arrange to get some. Mr. Schneer forwarded my letter to the head of Columbia publicity in Sydney

(Australia), Mr. Tony Malone. Mr. Malone said he would try to help John, and would write to Columbia in Los Angeles to try to get what John wanted. While waiting for this to happen I contacted the Melbourne publicity manager, Mr. John Allen, because he lived in the same city as I did, and I thought I could achieve more through a contact I could meet on a personal basis. I have found in the past, with collecting, that it is often easier to obtain items from someone if you can get what they want. So I decided to try this method with Mr. Allen, suggesting that with **THE GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD** coming up, perhaps I could arrange for John Moon to build some models of the creatures from **GOLDEN VOYAGE** in exchange for sets of stills, posters and whatever else was available on the film. I knew that John would agree to this arrangement as he had built several copies of Ray Harryhausen's models in the past, and enjoyed doing it. I should also point out here, should anyone get the wrong impression that I was 'cashing in' on John's talents, that John and I have always worked together as a team and do whatever is needed to enlarge the collection, etc.

Out of pure coincidence, John Moon had made contact with John Allen also, and it turned out that an agreement was reached between John Moon and John Allen for the making of the replica models. It was at this

time, September 1973, that I left Australia to go on my overseas trip. When I reached London on the final stage of my trip, I met with Ray Harryhausen and found that he had received a letter from John Moon, offering him to build replica model project... I was somewhat apprehensive of what Mr. Harryhausen might think; after all if John's models looked awful it wouldn't look too good using them in conjunction with the film's advertising. But, I'm happy to say that Ray was pleased with the idea and gave it his blessing, so to speak.

When I returned home I found that nothing had progressed on the project during my absence. In order that John build the models, naturally it was necessary for him to have stills of the creatures far in advance of the film's release date to enable him to have a suitable visual reference to go by. Here it was Christmas 1973, with the film due to be released at Easter 1974, and John had no stills; Columbia hadn't received any from their offices in the U.S.A. Fortunately I had brought back quite a few with me from overseas, and received over a hundred more long before our local Columbia office had any! So John went to work. As can be seen from the accompanying pictures, John started by building a rough wire frame, then sculpted the model over this in oil-based clay. From this he made a two piece mold from dental stone.



(1) First stage in construction of Centaur model, a wire frame is constructed, the bulkier parts of which are covered with masking tape.



(2) A basic shape of the horse body is built up in oil-based clay.



(3) The horse portion of the Centaur model is almost completed.



(4) The body of the horse has been given a rough "hair-like" skin texture, while the human portion is built up in clay.



(5)+(6)+(7) These three photos show the completed clay sculpture in various positions (or rather from different angles).



(8) Here we see the first half of the dental stone two-piece mold in place.



(9) Two completed Centaurs, cast in latex and painted.



(10) As with the Centaur, the same wire frame is constructed for the six-armed statue. Lower portion of the body is taking shape.



(11) More of the body is completed.



(12) Body has basic shape, only head and fine detail to go.



(13) Head is sculpted.



(14) Sculpture almost completed, only very fine details left to be added.



(15) The finished product—a latex cast model of the six-armed Kali. Six swords have been added to complete the effect.



(16) First stage in the sculpture of the Siren Figurehead.



(17) The Siren Figurehead nearing completion.



(18) The Siren Figurehead—complete with harpoon and nautical map.



THE EFFECTS: continued...

menace that was required to make the Kali a mighty foe.

And her demise is totally implausible; all that marble weight bumped off a ledge by one lightweight sailor is too much to believe. Surely a more convincing method of destruction could have been chosen.

Background plates are generally quite good, and the splits are excellent. In fact, the rear screen work in **GOLDEN VOYAGE** is, generally speaking, better throughout the film than the process work was in **VALLEY OF GWANGI**.

The foreground miniature on which the Kali was placed during the dance and for much of the swordfight is not properly painted; or else it was, and during lab work the color balance for the live action made the foreground color go wrong. For whatever reason, carelessness or lab, the foreground is off color and doesn't blend at all with the real ground. This is a small point, though, as the pace of the animation is so hectic that the audience doesn't have time to look around the scene and notice the color flaw.

One inspired moment prior to the swordfight is when Koura tosses his sword to the waiting grasp of one of her hands, whereupon swords instantly grow from her other hands. The replacement animation on the swords lends a very magical touch to the scene and produces quite an eye-catching sight.

Another very effective touch is the Kali's battle stance, which is impressively intimidating, with her arms arranged in tiers—front pair held low, mid-arms slightly higher, and rear arms held at shoulder level—with all

those wicked blades pointed at one very worried-looking Sinbad. The miniature blades look suitably metallic and Ray's use of sword substitution in conjunction with the background plate action produces some very furious swordplay. The swordfight is, regrettably, the last successful stop-motion sequence in the film.

The Kali model is brilliantly sculpted, with numerous improvements over her original art design. Gone are the circular breastplates and tinker-toy headdress. Instead the model is given a blouse effect that emphasizes her female features, her headgear is carefully designed to look non-top-heavy (as it had in the pre-production drawings), and of special interest is the "loin cloth" with heads (skulls?) sculpted into it... a really inspired bit of detailing.

If only the anti-puppet had been able to benefit from the imaginative paint job given to the mock-ups. The marks of corrosion on the large mock-ups perfectly hinted at the time-lost age of the dancing Goddess; the paint job was, in fact, quite similar to Talos' in **JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS**. Unfortunately the Kali was given only a vague touch of such corrosion & decay, and was basically as unsatisfying in her pigmentation as the other models.

The mock-ups are incredibly faithful to the design of the miniature. The hands used in the close shots of Sinbad battling with the Kali hold swords that do not match the ones used by the miniature Kali, but this is not especially noticeable due to the rapid action of the shots. With all due respect to Ray, the mock-ups in this film, of the Kali and the Siren, are

about the best ever done; they are magnificent.

Amongst animators and model-builders there are a number of creatures from mythology & legend that all technicians would love to work with. A Centaur character is one of universal appeal to all stop-motion enthusiasts by virtue of its unique appearance & form of locomotion, making it an ideal choice to be done with model animation. At one time Nassour Studios (producers of **BEAST OF HOLLOW MOUNTAIN**) had sculptor Henry Lyons build several plaster replacement models of a Centaur for an unfinished project. And many technicians in the business have expressed an interest in the possibilities inherent in a Centaur character.

But Ray beat everybody to the punch by incorporating a Centaur into **GOLDEN VOYAGE**. Unfortunately, it turned out to be the poorest model Ray has ever used in a production (second only to the Griffin), and the Centaur is a real disappointment instead of a fantastic triumph, as it should have been.

In the pre-production sketches, the Centaur had the familiar powerful musculature of bulging biceps, broad pectorals, and rounded deltoids that have been Ray's trademark in past critters like the Ymir, & the Cyclops. The horse portion has a very defined structure of bone and muscle, with only the merest hint of fur on the hind quarters, near the hooves, with the tail being very much like the real thing. All in all, as originally designed, the

A "CLOSEUP" view of the Centaur, posed here with the scale-model Margianna figure.



creature was quite satisfying in its concept of the mythological monster; it's a pity that the final version of the Centaur departed so much from the original concept. It ended up as a laughable throwaway of what could have been truly memorable.

One of the Centaur's major problems lies in its fur. Unlike the marvelous pelt work on the eohippus in *GWANGI*, the fur on the Centaur looks dry and lifeless and way too large for the body, while also managing to completely cover up any attempt at musculature in the horse-portion of the creature. Pelt transfer of hair-to-rubber is one of the most difficult techniques in model-building to master. . . Marcel Delgado put hair on *KONG* and he & George Lofgren worked on *JOE YOUNG*, while George also did the taxidermy work on Ray's *SEVENTH VOYAGE OF SINBAD*. Arthur Hayward did a marvelous job on the eohippus in *GWANGI*; Dave Allen did an excellent job on his *KONG*, and Jim Danforth has done some beautiful fur work on models. Ray would have greatly benefited from the assistance of George Lofgren or Arthur Hayward (or someone!) on the Centaur and the Griffin, as the fur work on these anti-puppets is, at best, awful.

The Griffin is crippled on screen because it looks like some hunks of clay wrapped in an old rug with turkey feathers glued on its wings. The legs have so much fur on them they look like cylinders. . . a drastic departure from Ray's original concept of a powerfully muscled animal. And the feathers are just not scaled to the rest of the model, and are so sparse as to emphasize their incorrect scale.

GOLDEN VOYAGE desperately needed Arthur Hayward's gifted touch on the models.

The animation of the Centaur is only fair, sometimes even jerky, indicating perhaps that Ray was not especially enthused about filming these sequences. The monster's tail moves like a tentacle, and the system of locomotion seems to be "man-inspired" as opposed to "horse-inspired," looking like the forelegs are walking with the hind legs trailing behind, producing an awkward gait.

There are one or two nice touches—the necklace of teeth, the spiked armband, the five-digit hands,



The Griffin vs. the Centaur—The fight of Good against Evil.



tiny body hairs on the torso, a good job of taxidermy on the head—but these don't save the model from being a disaster. There's no attempt whatsoever to hide the seam lines, which is unforgivable nowadays... back in the days of SEVENTH VOYAGE a seam or two on the Cyclops was permissible, but not with the state of the art as advanced as it is today.

Ray does an interesting thing during the sequence after the Griffin fight; watch the sailor in the background with the spear... the one that is grabbed by the Centaur. The spear is animated during the whole sequence!

The tussle between the Griffin and the Centaur was about as dull as

possible when compared to the lively, energetic struggle of the Cyclops and the Dragon in SEVENTH VOYAGE. It seemed as though Ray was bored with all the shots for this sequence; they have no vitality whatsoever.

When the Griffin came shambling on, it got the only catcalls I've ever heard tagged on a Ray Harryhausen creature... that model is so tacky... and adding insult to injury, the model is kept land-bound and denied the use of its wings—its only redeeming feature! The British paperback book describes a realistic battle such as logic would dictate, with the Centaur being subjected to strafing attacks of the Griffin, when it rakes the Centaur with its claws; rather exciting possibilities that were utterly ignored. The Griffin

sequences BEGGED for one or two aerial shots, but that old bugbear of budget may have prevented full realization of the potential. As it was, the last bits of animation in the film were really inferior.

In addition to the stop-motion effects, Ray utilized many other techniques to achieve his cinemiracles.

Early in the film there unfolds a rather interesting dream sequence which while nothing to boggle Dali, contains some fine "visions," the most intriguing of which is a silhouette of the Homunculus flying against rapidly moving storm clouds (time-lapse). The shot appeared to have been using a Traveling Matte of the Homunculus without his image printed in. The rest of the sequence consists of various suppers.

Ray employs three highly detailed miniature sets to impart a sense of grandeur to the major locales on Lamuria. Live action elements are introduced into these scenes of the miniatures via Traveling Matte.

The miniatures include the Temple of the Oracle, The Temple of the Green Men, and The Fountain of Destiny.

The Temple of the Oracle is a top-notch miniature that photographs very much like real stone. Its destruction is well executed, with tremendously realistic break-down of its crumbling stone, and plenty of dust helps the illusion succeed.

The Oracle himself is an actor, made up, and wearing an appliance of ram horns and beard, that is pretty satisfying visually, though it's difficult to get very fired up over those closeups of his mouth with its rotten teeth spilling out lines of dialogue. His arrival on screen is heralded by some "Flaming Fireball" cel art that is inexcusably misaligned so that the cartoon effects are not properly centered over the wall the Oracle is supposed to emerge from. These scenes, if done on an animation stand are impressive in their spectacular color, but disappointing in their misalignment. The colorful effects help to glaze the flaw over, but many people in the audience notice this instantly and it mars the mood the film has tried to build.

The exterior of The Temple of the Green Men is terrifically detailed and lit, with lots of shadows producing a very atmospheric image... which is severely marred by Ray's decision to

use real flames in a miniature idol's bowl carved into the side of a wall opposite the actual Temple; this flame completely hampers the illusion by revealing the comparative size of the miniature set. It's a shame that the budget would not allow for the printing in of high-speed flame rather than resorting to the use of the real fire.

The remaining miniature, the Fountain of Destiny, isn't quite as impressive as the others, because there is less ornamentation involved; the Fountain looks basically like STONEHENGE with a geyser of water and a pool in the center of the columns. Ray did a fine job of filming the cascading tower of water at high speed; it does not look overly miniature.

The set is slightly different than originally designed, with only one opening to the sky instead of two... a small change that hardly made any difference in the appearance of the final set. The choice of the Stonehenge type configuration for the stone pillars was excellent in not only the visual, aesthetic design, but in its mystical connotations.

All in all the miniatures are highly convincing and well up to Ray's usual high standards.

The picture has a minimum of water tank shots with miniature ships, wisely so because tank effects generally are quite difficult to pull off successfully. For the most part the miniature ships are of sufficient size to reduce the scale problems with waves, except in one shot of Koura's ship which includes too much water area and looks very much like it was shot in a bathtub. The final shot, of Sinbad sailing off into the sunset is excellent, even though it is not quite as glorious as the similar shot in the SEVENTH VOYAGE.

Also of interest in regard to tank shots are those scenes with the Siren in the water. It appeared as though the full-size mock-up was used for the scene where she hits the water, as there is little or no beading problem. The underwater scenes were most likely filmed with a cast of the ani-puppet to facilitate control, though it is possible the large mock-up might have been used for the underwater scenes. (Editor's note: It was the large mock-up.)

The last major effects in the film consist of the numerous blue-backing travelling mattes done at the Fountain of Destiny during the swordfight and when people are introduced into scenes of the geyser.

The shots of Koura fading away, and the swordfight proper, were all very carefully done on the blue-backing stage. In this matte process footage of the actors was exposed in front of a blue screen. When this footage was properly processed, the resulting footage was of the men against a black background. From this film a counter matte (of a black core of the actors moving against a clear background) was prepared. In an optical printer the matte rolls allowed the actors to be combined with any background scene desired; the background can be added to any area that had been originally photographed as blue.

So, during the fading set-ups, portions of Koura's costume were painted matte blue, so that in the matte work the background scenes would be added to the areas of his costume that were painted, producing the illusion he was dissolving away. A similar type of effect was used in Roger Vadim/Jane Fonda's BARBARELLA to show a character who had holes in his body through which the background could be seen.

The swordfight, with Koura and Sinbad was filmed with John Phillip Law fighting an actor dressed entirely in a matte blue costume covering head,

hands, feet, etc., so he was not included in the scenes except as a flashing blade! The blade was probably held by a hand grip extending out of the pommel (that was also painted matte blue), so that the final effect was of the blade flashing about in the invisible hands of the wizard.

There is no excessive bleed along the matte lines, as is a possibility with most matte work if not carefully executed, except in the dissolving sequences where bleed is pretty noticeable.

GOLDEN VOYAGE is not the showcase of outstanding special visual effects that JASON AND THE ARGONAUTS was, yet it is not fair to heap on this film undue criticism of the effects. Certainly some of the visuals were substandard, but on the whole they are well done. Let's face facts—it is vitally important to remember a major consideration when evaluating the effects in this film (or the film as a whole): while you and I may be in the business and/or fans of visual effects, this picture was not made for us, but rather for the majority of uninformed laymen who don't ogle the screen looking for split-screen lines, sword substitutions, etc. All they want is to be entertained, and in this respect, all the film's effects work very well. And isn't entertainment the ultimate goal of the cinemagician?

If you didn't like the visuals in GOLDEN VOYAGE, check it out again!



Comparison continued...

THE 7TH VOYAGE OF SINBAD is a spectacular, childlike movie which genuinely succeeds in conveying the mysterious and delightful atmosphere of a written fairytale. This is not to say that its script boasts the rich prose characteristic of great children's literature, but the fragile quality of fantasy pervades every frame of film. This atmosphere is firmly established right from the beginning, commencing with Robert Gill's charming and piquant title designs (like sophisticated, impressionistic children's drawings), which conspire with Bernard Herrmann's captivating music. The story proper is packed with incident, and sweeps the spectator from one fantastic encounter to another. Such backgrounds as the Alhambra (the famous Moorish castle in Granada, Spain, with its beautifully carved walls and ceilings), and the lush scenery of the Spanish locations, look to have been lifted from storybook illustrations. All such scenes are opulently captured by cinematographer Wilkie Cooper, in very brilliant Technicolor. The principal actors acquit themselves very well, entering into the spirit of the enterprise. Outstanding is Kerwin Mathews as Sinbad, whose portrayal is warm and earnest, and whose fine voice lends veracity to the dialog. In harmonious contrast is Torin Thatcher's broad, archvil Sokurah, whose playing is great fun to behold. Bernard Herrmann's provocative music enhances all the proceedings with an eclectic charm which rivals Stravinsky



or Prokofiev. His music lends exuberance to the final shot, showing Sinbad's ship sailing for the horizon.

No one knows why Ray Harryhausen decided to return to the character and theme of Sinbad and his adventures. The news was an initial disappointment to some, who firmly identified Sinbad with the first film. A new actor playing Sinbad, in new circumstances, just didn't sit right. In some ways these forebodings proved true. THE GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD is not quite as satisfying as the former film. Somehow a similar atmosphere of fantasy and innocence is missing. No examination of the film seems to suggest why this is so, since it has a basically good plot and handsome production values. It may be due to the sum effect of some tiny flaws the movie possesses, which make it less than the perfect film SEVENTH VOYAGE OF SINBAD seems to be, by comparison.

The re-released soundtrack album of Bernard Herrmann's Sinbad score. While the few copies of the original COLPIX album are selling for over a hundred dollars apiece, this record can be bought for five dollars. (It is said that this is a bootleg record—illegal re-release—and this is in all probability true, as there is no address on the record label or album jacket for the "Reissued by Request" record company.)

One such is the musical score by the esteemed composer Miklos Rozsa. His is a characteristically conscientious and professional job, sporadically very exciting, and always atmospheric. But it somehow fails to create a galvanizing atmosphere like Bernard Herrmann's SINBAD score, with which it must be compared. This is not always entirely the fault of Rozsa! The score is so wretchedly dubbed that it is often buried under mundane sound effects, and is denied the ability to assert itself. It often makes the music seem less effective than it actually is.

There are small flaws in two of the special effect sequences. One of these, depicting the Temple of the Oracle, clearly resembles what it is, a nice tabletop miniature. Much more effective was the hewn cliff face and cave seen in THE 7TH VOYAGE, perhaps because it was matted into a living scene. In this case, matted actors move in front of the temple miniature

The first episode of the five part comic strip serialization of 7th VOYAGE that was released to newspapers throughout the country in 1958.





FAR LEFT AND CENTER: The MARVEL COMICS - **WORLDS UNKNOWN** treatment of THE GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD. Artwork by George Tuska and Vince Colletta was atrocious, and errors freely abound. (A male Siren Figurehead, a four-armed statue named Karo, no Griffin, etc.)
LEFT: The cover of the DELL - **7TH VOYAGE OF SINBAD** comic, with artwork by John Buscema. The book's back cover was a full color map of Colossa.

like cutouts. The lighting of the miniature doesn't suggest sunlight, though it's supposed to, and the realism suffers from intercutting with views of the actors standing in real sunlight. While we're being petty, we ought to make mention of the other flawed scene, depicting the cliff entrance to the cave of the Green Men. This miniature is beautifully constructed and photographed, but the illusion is spoiled by big flickering flames, birthday candles, in the lap of a stone idol. What a shame a real blazing fire could not have been photographed and inserted in miniature in the proper spot, to preserve the otherwise impressive realism. Of course, this is nitpicking of the first order. To counterbalance this kind of criticism, let it be said that other scenic effects created by artificial means for the film are extremely convincing and pleasing, such as the Arabian cities, the bas-relief effigies which appear on the cliffs of Lemuria, et al.

Any remaining shortcomings reside with the performances of the actors. John Phillip Law is an exceptionally good actor who defies acting fads, but his portrayal of Sinbad is not as engaging as the hero we're accustomed to seeing in Harryhausen films. Certainly he does not match the effectiveness of Kerwin Mathews' performance. Law conscientiously attempts to assume an Arabian accent, but it sometimes distorts his delivery. Caroline Munro, though a beauty, is a slightly bland presence and not as ingratiating as Kathryn Grant's Parisa. Even Tom Baker as Koura, so impressive in his role as Rasputin in **NICHOLAS AND ALEXANDRA**, does

not scale the highest heights of villainy. (Thus far no actor has made as much out of this kind of material as did Conrad Veidt in **THE THIEF OF BAGDAD**.)

Harryhausen's animated special effects are splendid, in a league with **THE 7TH VOYAGE**. The quality of the animation, particularly in regard to the Homunculus, is maddeningly good. Then there is the showpiece of the dancing, and later sword-brandishing, statue of Kall, which for sheer spectacle and technical excellence rivals anything Harryhausen has ever done. One of the principal monsters, the Centaur, bears an unfortunately intimate resemblance to Harryhausen's Cyclops, which initially annoys the fan to whom the Cyclops is a virtually sacrosanct character in the Harryhausen catalog. Its animation, however, is virtuosity itself, with tail, four legs, arms, fingers, lips, and head all in apparent perpetual motion, all very smooth and naturalistic.

The growth of the animated sequences out of the story fibre is smooth and logical (if anything in fantasy is logical!), with the exception of the Griffin, which strolls in without warning only to be promptly destroyed. There is some mystic murmuring about the forces of Good and Evil, battling Eternally, so that since the Centaur is definitely evil, we are given to assume the Griffin represents good. Which is shaky. Anyway, if this is worth arguing about (and it isn't), it is more than made up for by the very satisfactory insinuation of the other monsters, particularly the Homunculus, into the storyline.

The other technical departments

generally carry their weight. Ted Moore's photography is exceptionally handsome (much better than Erwin Hillier's work for **THE VALLEY OF GWANGI**), the colors muted and natural, distinguishing his work from Cooper's brighter approach. In fact, Moore's work represents perhaps the best photography to date for a Harryhausen film. Harryhausen himself matches it expertly for those scenes which combine his animated miniatures with prefilmed material. His lighting of his Homunculus for all 'tis' scenes is splendid. The sound men are unaccountably sloppy with the dubbing of Rozsa's score. Portions of it are almost inaudible, and this is not characteristic of Harryhausen's previous films. The Siren sequence featured some of Rozsa's cleverest music, and it is next to impossible to hear. Even the main title music is too quietly dubbed and flatly mixed. The main titles themselves, by the by, are attractive, but are in no league at all with Gill's work for **THE SEVENTH VOYAGE**, and convey no emotional overtones.



Kerwin Mathews as Sinbad.
1958



There have been devastating changes in the movie industry since even as recently as 1958, when **THE SEVENTH VOYAGE OF SINBAD** was released. The fact that Harryhausen and Charles Schneer still pour as much care into their films now as they did then, in spite of rising costs and changing tastes, is well-evidenced by **THE GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD**. It is this conspicuous care that keeps the appetite whetted for their every new production, and we'll express the wish that they may long continue in the creation of these jeweled films.



John Phillip Law as Sinbad.
1974



FAR LEFT:

A curiosity piece: a **SINBAD** paperback, printed by **TAB BOOKS** (an affiliate of Scholastic Magazines of New York) and released in 1958. Although a still from **7TH VOYAGE OF SINBAD** accompanied this book's ad, it had nothing to do with that film, & was simply a retelling by Gladys Davidson of several classic Arabian Nights stories.

CENTER:

WARNER PAPERBACK LIBRARY's novelization of **GOLDEN VOYAGE OF SINBAD**. Distribution of this book was extremely sparse, so much so that today, one year after it was printed, it is now a collector's item.



PATRICK WAYNE will take over the role of **SINBAD** in the new film from **COLUMBIA: SINBAD AND THE EYE OF THE TIGER**.

Live action footage is being shot this summer on locations in **SPAIN, MALTA** and in the **MEDITERRANEAN**.

COLUMBIA PICTURES hopes that this film, their third **SINBAD** collaboration with **CHARLES H. SCHNEER** and **RAY HARRYHAUSEN**, will be as wildly popular as it's two predecessors.
(Frankly, so do we!!)



MOON MODELS, continued...

This was harder than may first appear, as unlike normal animation models (which are sculpted in a non-action position) John's models were sculpted in an action position which often made the construction of a two-piece mold very difficult. Next liquid latex was slush cast in the mold; the mold opened, the excess seems trimmed away and the resulting model painted. The original plan was for John to build only three of the creatures, the Centaur, the Six-armed Statue and the Siren Figurehead. As the actual release date of **GOLDEN VOYAGE** has now twice been postponed (because of the lack of a playdate that would coincide with school holidays) John has decided he will make a small replica of the Golden Mask seen in the film.

As **GOLDEN VOYAGE** will now be released here in Melbourne during next Christmas' holiday season (December 1974) there is still plenty of time to complete the project.

So far Mr. John Allen is most pleased with the results of John's efforts, and our enthusiasm for the film has resulted in a situation where both John Moon and myself will appear on a local television program to talk about the film. It is also planned to have a 'monster drawing contest' for children at one of Melbourne's shopping complexes; John Moon and myself have been nominated as judges, with prizes of free tickets to see the film and some of John's replica creatures going to the winning children. John also plans to send a set of the models to Ray Harryhausen. We have gained some great pleasure out of this venture and only hope it contributes to the success of the film in this city.



Just before we went to press, we received the following, final Moon model photo—the Golden Mask worn by the Grand Vizier of Mesrebia. Excellent work John!!



Pre-production sketches done by Ray Harryhausen, in the 1950's, for **THE SEVENTH VOYAGE OF SINBAD**. The animodels constructed for this film closely followed these designs with few changes made. (Unlike those done in the 1970's, for **GOLDEN VOYAGE**, where extensive changes were made.)



FLESH GORDON



FLESH GORDON was produced by independent film makers Howard Ziehm and Bill Osco, who with a million dollars earned in the porno field with their three previous releases—MONA, HARLOT, and HOLLYWOOD BLUE, decided to plow it all back into this most ambitious of projects. Some of the most talented effectsmen in Hollywood served on this film under various capacities—Jim Danforth (in the film's credits as Mij Htrofnad) animated the Beetle Man, and was responsible for the picture's many masterful glass matte paintings. (For example—the towering mountains behind the shark rocket's landing field; & the panoramic cross section of the Royal Flush.) The Beetle Man, by the way, did not contain any armature parts from a KING KONG skeleton (as reported in many film magazines). That's a lot of bunk! Nor did David Allen build the puppet... The armature was basically a reworked Pete

Peterson beetle man model (hence the creature has been tagged as a "beetle man.") Rick Baker sculpted the arms, and George Barr (who also drew the film's beautiful color poster) designed him.

The Penisauruses were sculpted over a wire armature by Laine Liska, and were animated and filmed by Bill Hedge. The Great God Porno was animated partially by David Allen, but the majority of that sequence's fine scenes were stop-framed by talented newcomer Robert Maine, who did a particularly commendable job in imparting that model with character. Tom Scherman and Greg Jien can take a bow for the bulk of the miniature work—and it is excellent! Also contributing to the film's success were Douglas Beswick, Russ Turner, Craig Nueswanger, Steve Czerkas, Jim Aupperle and Joe Clark. ☆

For further coverage of FLESH GORDON, see the February 1973 issue

of PENTHOUSE (12 pages 39 photos plus text), the spring 1972 (volume 2, number 1) issue of CINE-FANTASTIQUE (2 pages 4 photos), and the winter 1974 (volume 3, number 4) issue of CINE-FANTASTIQUE (6½ pages 15 photos).

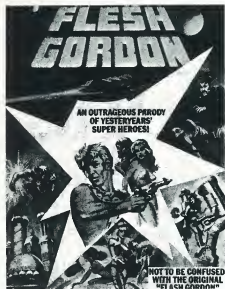
(Due to its X-rating, we include the following synopsis, for those readers unable to view this film.)

The time is the 1930's. The setting is our planet earth, which has been thrown into carnal chaos by a mysterious ray. The world's top

BELOW, LEFT: The Fearsome Foursome (l. to r.—Prince Precious, Dale Ardor, Flesh Gordon, and Dr. Flexi Jerkoff.)

BELOW, RIGHT: Wang's Castle





ABOVE: The alternate FLESH GORDON poster design (left) that was used in New York newspapers during the film's run. The full color George Barr poster (right) used in New York subways, theater lobbies, and city streets; was however, rejected for newspaper use as being too risqué. BELOW: Yet another poster design advertising FLESH GORDON, this one incorporating portions of the George Barr poster, redrawn—used only in Europe.





The Beetle Man.

scientists, led by Professor Gordon, world authority on animal behavior and renowned physicist, are holding a conference in Washington, D.C. to evaluate the situation and decide upon a solution. Unable to agree upon the nature of the problem, (a toss-up between mass hypnosis and bad cans of Passover Tuna), the scientists are asked to await the arrival of Professor Gordon's son, Flesh.

Enroute by plane from an important ice hockey championship in Tibet, Flesh Gordon meets the dazzling Dale Ardor. However, the plane is struck by the mysterious ray (sex beam) causing it and the passengers to lose control. Unaffected by the sex ray, Flesh parachutes to safety with Dale. Recovering from their descent into a wooded area, they encounter Dr. Flexi Jerkoff who explains that he has located a planet called Porno from which the sex ray emerged. Dr. Jerkoff offers Flesh and Dale an invitation to

save humanity, and they accept.

After a harrowing flight on Jerkoff's specially equipped spacecraft, (a penis shaped vehicle, invented by the doctor while under the influence of the sex ray) Flesh, Dale and Dr. Jerkoff crash land on Porno. A shark-shaped rocket appears, and fires upon our intrepid heroes, forcing them down to the planet's surface. Flesh, Dale and Dr. Jerkoff are chased into the underground caverns of Porno by the shark ship's crew, where all concerned encounter giant Penisauruses (with baby blue eyes). Some timely raygun blasts force the creatures back into their subterranean holes.

Flesh and co. are escorted to the lavish throne room of the Emperor Wang; a degenerate botanist, whose sexual organ had previously been devoured by the dreaded Penis Fly Trap plant. Wang quickly deals his blows to our intrepid threesome: Jerkoff is taken to the laboratory in which full use will be made of his brain, Dale is to become the perverted Wang's bride and Flesh is to be taken to the sex depletor, his essence removed. The arrival of Amora, Witch Queen of Porno, changes Flesh's fate: he will instead fight three ape women, and if he wins, he is Amora's! He does, and in a puff of smoke, both Flesh and Amora vanish.

Queen Amora is killed when her giant swan craft is shot down by Wang's men, but Flesh escapes unscathed. The ghost of Amora appears before Flesh and Dr. Jerkoff (who had escaped from the Prince of Porno's laboratory) and gives them the magic Power Pasties—the only force able to overcome the sex beam! Now armed with the weapon they need, our heroes head for Wang's palace.

The wedding ceremony has been completed but the marriage has yet to be consummated. Wang's female consort quickly whisks Dale through a secret opening in the wall, and into the subterranean kingdom of Chief Nellie and her Dyke girls. The dykes attempt to initiate Dale into the Rites of Bililitis, but Flesh intervenes in time. A gong is sounded by one of Nellie's girls, and a ferocious Beetle Man bursts through the door. Assuming a karate stance, it attacks Flesh on a nearby stairwell. A mysterious stranger enters the chamber, loosing a poisoned arrow at the Beetle Man. The archer is Prince

Precious, leader of his band of gay young men, and, in fact, the rightful heir to the throne of Porno. He and his loyal followers were forced by Wang to flee to the planet's Forest Kingdom, there to bide their time . . .

Dr. Jerkoff is able to construct a weapon, utilizing the Power Pasties, to counteract the sex beam. On the return trip to the royal palace, one of Wang's spies—who had infiltrated Prince Precious's gay young men, steals one of the two Pasties. While chasing the spy through the corridors of the palace Flesh, Dale, Dr. Jerkoff and Prince Precious are tricked into Wang's devilish Royal Flush, and are emptied into Porno's sewer system. "Flesh Gordon is dead!" sings Wang, but not so, as our heroes emerge from the John, thoroughly soaked but none the worse for wear. Wang summons the abominable Rapist Robots with their pulsating probes, but they too are defeated, and the missing Pastie recovered!

Sensing defeat, Wang races towards his last hope—the cathedral wherein stands the sixty foot tall statue of the apellike Great God of Porno. Wang's invocations hold true, as the statue comes to life with a droil "I love murder!" Flesh and co. have departed the throne room and it is while attempting to destroy the sex beam that they meet the rampaging God. Taking a distinct liking towards Dale, the Great God scoops her up in the palm of his hand and climbs to his towering hangout.



A Rapist Robot



ABOVE, TOP: The Great God Porno, and Friend.

CENTER: Our intrepid heroes bid Prince Precious a fond adieu. (Note missing portion of the Penis-ship [left] indicating this is a large incomplete mockup.)



Flesh, Dr. Jerkoff and Prince Precious, in one of Wang's shark jets, blast away at the God. Deftly placed force beams hit the Great God in the face and the rear end and Flesh, lowering himself down a rope ladder, is able to retrieve Dale. The God Porno is good and mad, and as he reaches for his escaping captives loses his balance, falling over the tower's edge and smack onto the sex beam directly below! Sex beam, God, and castle all vanish in the series of titanic explosions that follow! Flesh Gordon has conquered the forces of evil!

Goodbyes are said, and as our dynamic threesome speed towards Earth, Dale greets our planet with a plaintive, "There's no place like home!" It is then that we see the

closing title card—"Don't miss our heroes' further adventures—THE PERILS OF FLESH." ☆

The following is an excerpt from an editorial by Tom Reamy, that appeared in his excellent magazine TRUMPET, concerning the filming of FLESH GORDON. We thank Tom for allowing us to reprint this essay. (Tom is currently at work on a new publishing venture, entitled NICKELODEON, which will contain the same type high quality material as TRUMPET did. Write Tom for further details, at: 1131 White, Kansas City, Mo. 64126.)

One of the big topics of conversation around at the time was the filming of "Flesh Gordon," a porno version of you know what. Greg Jein was building beautiful little models of phallic rayguns and spaceships; Mike Minor was designing and building fabulous sets; vaginal caves and the like; a great many of the people known by George Barr... were involved in some way with the film. Bjo [Trimble] herself, later went to work on the film as the makeup department. It turned out, eventually, to be practically a fan project.

I knew Mike Minor slightly from Baycon, so I started going over to the studio and watching them build sets. I wanted a job on that film so bad I could taste it—both because my income tax money was running out and because I wanted to work on a film...any film. If it happened to be a science fiction porno film, so much the better.

My getting under foot finally paid off. Mike, who has more talent and energy than the entire Alabama National Guard, eventually decided he needed an assistant. As he was practically the only person around who knew what he was doing, he had reached a saturation point. (The incompetence involved in that film would make your hair curl.)

So I became Property Master.

When you're a non-union property master, it's only a fancy name for gopher.

There was still a month of set-building before actual shooting began. My first task was to find authentic seats for the Ford Tri-motor interior set. A simple one, you think. As it turned out it wasn't too hard. It

only took me about three days. I called all the property houses, who can rent you everything from a stuffed mouse to a working sub-machine gun. No seats. Universal thought they might have some. I spent one whole afternoon rummaging around in the Universal property room and behind the false fronts on the backlot. I wasn't having any luck finding Ford Tri-motor seats but I was having a whale of a good time.

I finally found them at the Aviation museum near the Orange County Airport. (Ford Tri-motor seats, in case you're ever asked, are made of wicker.) They also threw in an authentic mike and headset.

I had to find torches for the dungeon...you know, the barbaric-looking ones in all the *Marla Montez* pictures. The prop-houses were again no help, so this time I got to rummaging around in Paramount's property room. More fun! (As I was coming out with an armload of clunky, spiky wrought iron torches that caught on everything within twenty feet, I met this actor I've seen four thousand times but whose name I don't think I ever knew, going in. "Are those for me to read by?" he asked. "If you plan to do your reading in the dungeon," I quipped. It must have been okay because he laughed.)

There were countless other props I had to locate, but in most cases it was just a matter of going to the prop house and carting them to the sound stage.

One interesting one was a penis-shaped mouthpiece for a hookah. Would you believe I actually found one—in a head shop on Hollywood Boulevard.

Then, finally, shooting started. It was interesting—not to say fascinating. The first scene shot was the Ford Tri-motor interior. I had my first experience of being surrounded by naked actors. (You see, the ray coming from Mongo, pardon me, "Porno," isn't a destructo ray anymore; it's a sex ray. When it catches the plane in which *Flesh* and *Dale* are riding, the passengers have an orgy.)

They discovered a couple of weeks later that they had shot part of the scene with an empty camera, so the set had to be rebuilt, and I had to go to the Orange County Airport and haul those damn chairs back again.

Shooting part of a scene with an empty camera may seem, on a scale from one to ten, fairly incompetent, I would rate it only as a two or so. The eights and nines and tens would come later.

One criteria of the incompetence involved is the budget. It started out with a \$80,000 budget and wound up costing nearly three quarters of a million. The sixty thou was very, very high for a porno film anyway. They usually run from ten to thirty thousand.

One problem with "*Flesh Gordon*" was the director. He had never directed before so he could allow for inexperience, but his main problem was he did not seem to realize that directing a movie was mostly physical. He talked a lot about "kharma" but couldn't tell an actor when to move from this chalk mark to that chalk mark. He had also written the script (which was really quite good) and would edit it. I wasn't at the screening (complete minus special effects) but I was told that the director was complimented on his fine rough cut. "Rough cut?" he exclaimed, "That's the final cut!"

He was fired.

The animator who was to do the *Penissurus* (that's right) and the *Beetle Man*, finished the former after about six months. The color didn't match the live-action part of the sequence.

He was fired.

The animator who was to do the *Great God Nesuhyrrah* (which is you-know-who spelled backwards, and which looked suspiciously like the cyclops from "*The Seventh Voyage of Sinbad*") hadn't exposed a frame of film after nearly a year had passed.

He was fired.

Only Tom Scherman and Bob Costa survived in the special effects department. Tom built all the large models, robots, miniature sets, spaceship interiors, etc. Bob was doing the opticals. When I left California nearly two years after the initial shooting on the film had been completed, the special effects were still unfinished.

Long before then the producers had realized that there was no possible way of making any money on the porno circuits with a picture costing that much. So, they went back and reshot, getting rid of all the hardcore

sequences and Lord knows what else. I wasn't involved with any of the reshooting so I have no idea what they eventually came up with. (Editor's note: Tom was able to see the finished film recently, and, in a letter to me, he expressed his final reactions to the production in which he had participated. . .)

I finally got to see "*Flesh Gordon*" about a month ago when it opened in Kansas City. I was pleasantly surprised at the excellent quality of the special effects (most of the time). The acting and direction was just as rotten as I remembered it. I had heard that they were reshooting in order to get an R rating—as I think I mentioned in the editorial—but I saw no evidence of any reshooting. Only one scene do I not remember seeing shot. At the end when *Flesh* climbs down the rope ladder and rescues *Dale*, there is a shot of him climbing out of the doorway of Wang's dragon ship. That was shot later as no full-size mock-ups of the dragon ships were done during the original shooting.

All they did to clean it up was to cut the sex scenes to the bone. (I understand the Midwestern print is cleaned up a bit more than the New York print.) There were four hard core scenes shot originally: *Dale*, *Flesh*, and *Jerkoff* in *Jerkoff's* ship on the way there; *Flesh* and *Princess Amora* in the swan ship; *Dale* and the black girl in the amazon underground; and a gay orgy on *Prince Precious'* island. Those were all trimmed to a few seconds. The orgy in the Ford trimotor at the beginning was just a lot of naked

(Continued on page 47)



LAND OF THE LOST

H.R. Pufnstuf.
The Bugaloos.
Lidville.

Sigmund and the Sea Monsters.
And now, The Land of the Lost.

The fifth show to come to network television from the production team of Sid and Marty Krofft. It was mainly a juvenile-oriented program, as all of the Krofft produced shows have been, but the mature fantasy-film buff could find of interest the many minutes of stop-motion animated models that abounded in every episode—certainly a welcome relief from the barrage of cartoon dinosaurs that have been so prevalent on television in the past.

The Krofft brothers hired two top pros to helm this project: Gene Warren, famous for his work on George Pal's Puppetoons short subjects; JACK, THE GIANT KILLER, and THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF THE BROTHER'S GRIMM was the show's associate producer. (All animation sequences—about 100 minutes total for the entire series—were shot at Mr. Warren's EXCELSIOR studios on La Brea, in Los Angeles. Other work done at these studios includes the Chuckwagon dog food television commercials, and the Tool Box short for ABC's Curiosity Shop show of several seasons ago.) Wah Chang, who produced the short subject DINOSAURS, THE TERRIBLE LIZARDS, and worked on George Pal's BROTHER'S GRIMM and THE TIME MACHINE films, was in charge of dinosaur design. Wah was aided on the above work by Doug Beswick, who constructed some of the beast's armatures. Several new models were made for the show from the cannibalizing of older miniatures, but use was also made of several older prehistoric creations from the educational short DINOSAURS, THE

TERRIBLE LIZARDS. These were incorporated into the series to add scope to the number of species the heroes encountered.

Primarily the dinosaurs were built up of cut foam and covered with rubber cement and paper towelling to simulate reptilian flesh. This method of construction is used when the more painstaking process of modeling the creatures first in clay, then making latex molds is prohibited by lack of time or budget.

Three larger puppet dinosaur heads were also constructed for the series—one each of "Grumpy" the Tyrannosaurus Rex, "Dopey" the baby Brontosaurus (with eyelids that open and close), and "Alice" the Allosaurus. Each large head was gifted with a remarkable paint job. (Unlike those made for the old Imogene Coca CBS show, "It's About Time," which utilized the Marcel Delgado models from DINOSAURUS as non-animated puppets!)

Animation was handled by Gene Warren Jr., Peter Kleinow ("Sneaky Pete" of the Flying Burrito Brothers rock group, animator on dozens of Art Clokey productions like GUMBY and DAVEY AND GOLIATH), and Harry Walton (who built and animated "Ugly Bird" in THE LEGEND OF HILLBILLY JOHN, and has worked on Gene's Chuckwagon commercials).

David Gerrold, writer of several scripts for Star Trek, was story editor.

Altho aimed at the younger set, the show set forth several intriguing premises. It was never actually explained how forest ranger Rick Marshall (Spencer Milligan), his teenage son Will (Wesley Eure), and daughter Holly (Kathy Coleman) entered the Land of the Lost—an alternate universe with three moons; peopled by humanoid monkey-men; prehistoric

creatures; seven foot tall reptile men—the Sleestak (played by the members of a California basketball team); and other unfortunate Earthmen who had also inadvertently entered this strange world. (Episode 4 "Downstream"—a grizzled old prospector; episode 13 "Follow That Dinosaur"—two members of George Washington's Valley Forge troops; and episode 16 "Hurricane"—a parachutist from Earth's future.)

Episode 3 "Dopey," introduced the baby Brontosaurus, a strawberry-eating scene-stealer with a remarkable amount of character for an animated model. (Remarkable, considering the time given to developing his personality... which is, of course, directly related to budget.)

Episode 6 introduced "The Stranger," Enik, a sentient Sleestak, and, like the earthmen, he was trying to get back to his own time period. He was a time-traveller, who, thinking he had entered his planet's past, discovered he had instead entered his world's future—a future of ruined temples, and unheard of creatures. He found his own people had reverted back to the barbaric, non-thinking ways of their early ancestors.

Episode 8 gave us our first look at the "Skylons," found inside the golden monolith, they were sky-flying pylons that in some way controlled the weather. But who controlled them? Who created the monolith? We were seemingly given the answer in episode 12, "The Possession," another story concerning the golden slab. Inside the object was a glowing ball, with the image of a Sleestak upon it.

But the strangest was yet to come in the last episode of the season (and seemingly the last episode of the series), number 17, entitled "Circle." In it, our heroes, with the aid of Enik, are finally able to escape from confinement by somehow getting their own repeating images in the time portal to take their place. This show's title was an extremely apt one, as the entire series is indeed a "Circle," a Möbius Strip, if you will, (connected at both ends, with no beginning or ending) that directly and cleverly led into the next week's repeat of "Cha-ka"—the program's first episode.

But what of Land of the Lost's intended viewers? Those youngsters
(Continued on page 47)

Master model builder Wah Chang with Tyrannosaurus Rex he created for use in his educational short, DINOSAURS THE TERRIBLE LIZARDS (1971). LAND OF THE LOST's T-Rex was built over the former model's armature. (Which originally belonged to the Cormoran figure in the film JACK, THE GIANT KILLER.)



Foam body with replacement heads used to simulate various horned dinosaurs. Solid heads sculpted by Doug Beswick, who also built the armature for this body. All final foam and body work by Wah Chang.



A close shot of the Tyrannosaurus Rex. All photographs of Mr. Chang were taken in the garden of his home in Carmel, California. Pictures by Gail Hickman.





Selected scenes from NBC TV's **LAND OF THE LOST**. (With Spencer Milligan, Wesley Eure and Kathy Coleman as the three transplanted earthlings, and Philip Paley as Cha-Ka, a Paku inhabitant of the alternate universe in which they land.)



FLESH GORDON:continued...

bodies writhing—no hardcore. The orgy going on on the floor of Wang's throneroom was not shot as hardcore, but quite a few of the actors weren't simulating—as you can tell if you look closely at the background during the throneroom scenes.

I do remember spending many long hours building the swan ship interior set, but only a tiny bit of it made it to the screen. Originally there was a pilot in the scene sitting in a

crystal chair operating a crystal control panel. I don't know why they cut that. There was also a scene in a New York City apartment that is hit by the sex ray. The scene as filmed had a definitely blue-collar worker listening to the radio and drinking beer while his wife irons. (I spent quite a while finding furniture and props that looked Thirties for that scene, too.) Suddenly the radio program (which of course at that time was live) turns into a sex orgy—they were thinking of using

Charlie McCarthy—then the ray hits the apartment.

There was a lot of stuff in the script that read very funny, but the actors blew most of them. There were also many references to "The Wizard of Oz" but only one made it to the screen—Dale's lone line at the end: "There's no place like home." Wang was played in many scenes as a caricature of Margaret Hamilton—but, for some reason, they cut them all. ☆

LAND OF THE LOST:continued...

who watch shows like The Pink Panther, Hong Kong Phooey and Scooby-Doo? Their untrained minds certainly could not comprehend the sophisticated theories put forth by professional science-fiction writers Niven and Gerrold, and must have passed off the show as, finally, unsatisfying...

And that is the ultimate failure of Land of the Lost—which by mixing cute dinosaurs and little girls with cerebral theories on time displacement strove to garner a larger audience than it should have, and may have lost both groups, in the end. ☆

David Gerrold on
LAND OF THE LOST, and the
show's final episode:

...I am no longer with the show, having suffered an attack of (probably terminal)

acute integrity.

"CIRCLE" was designed to lead back into the reruns as painlessly as possible. Not knowing if the show would be back for a second year, I did something I always wanted to do, and that is, set up a specific ending so that you do know how the people escape. But I also had to leave the ending open-ended so that we could continue in the following year.

Hence, "CIRCLE." ☆

(For another article concerning the above series (and a fine one, too!) send 65¢ to: Jim Main, 18 Culvert City Rd., New Milford, Conn. 06776, and ask for a copy of *PPFSZT#8.)

LAND OF THE LOST episodes — 1974-75 season

program title	author
1. "Cha-ka"	David Gerrold
2. "The Sleestak God"	David Gerrold
3. "Dopey"	Margaret Armen
4. "Downstream"	Larry Niven
5. "Tag-team"	Norman Spinrad
6. "The Stranger"	Walter Koenig
7. "Album"	Dick Morgan
8. "Skylons"	Dick Morgan
9. "The Hole"	Wina Sturgeon
10. "The Paku Who Came to Dinner"	Berry Blitzler
11. "The Search"	Ben Bova
12. "The Possession"	David Gerrold
13. "Follow That Dinosaur"	Dick Morgan
14. "Stone Soup"	Joyce Perry
15. "Elsewhen"	D. C. Fontana
16. "Hurricane"	David Gerrold & Larry Niven
17. "Circle"	Larry Niven & David Gerrold

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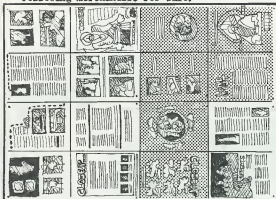
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